11. (Once Amended) A grate assembly for a gas cooktop, said grate assembly

comprising:

at least one grate section comprising a substantially rectangular frame

comprising:

at least one exterior frame element comprising a top surface;

at least one interior frame element comprising a top surface; and

a cross member frame element comprising a top surface, said cross member frame element extending between said exterior frame element and said interior frame element, said top surfaces of said interior cross member frame element and said interior frame element substantially coplanar and elevated relative to a top surface of said exterior frame element; and

at least one of said cross member frame element and said interior frame element comprising a recessed surface extending from said coplanar surface, said recessed surface comprising a flame clearance gap.

17. (Once Amended) A gas fired cooktop comprising:

at least a first gas burner and a second gas burner; and

a grate assembly surrounding said first gas burner and said second gas burner, said grate assembly comprising an interior frame element extending between said first gas burner and said second gas burner, said interior frame element comprising a cooking utensil surface and a flame clearance recessed portion extending from cooking utensil surface.

22. (Once Amended) A gas fired cooktop comprising:

a first gas burner and an adjacent second gas burner;

a first grate section surrounding said first and second gas burners;

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